

## Message Text

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ACTION VO-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 SY-05 SAB-02 L-03

PPT-01 PM-04 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 NSAE-00 INR-07 SS-15

NSC-05 /057 W

-----127004 091822Z /47/40

R 082245Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2716

INFO INS, CO WASHDC

PANCANAL

USCINCSO

SECDEF WASHDC

INS NEW YORK

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR GARBLED IN PARA TWO

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, SPOP, ASEC, PN

SUBJECT: ILLEGAL ENLISTMENT OF PANAMANIAN INTO U.S. ARMED FORCES

REF: A. PANAMA 4273 (NOTAL); B. PANAMA 4371

SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT PROBLEM OF PANAMANIAN ENTER-  
ING U.S. ARMED FORCES ILLEGALLY HAS BECOME ONE OF MAJOR PRO-  
PORTIONS. FRAUDULENT ENLISTMENT PRESENTS SERIOUS SECURITY  
CONSIDERATIONS. ALIEN SERVICEMEN HAVE QUICKLY TAKEN AD-  
VANTAGE OF SECTION 329 OF IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT  
AND SPECIAL PROVISION ENACTED FOR VIET NAM HOSTILITIES TO  
OBTAIN EXPEDITIOUS NATURALIZATION. THE CALCULATED USE OF  
FRAUD TO ENTER THE US AND ARMED FORCED HAS RESULTED IN AN  
UNACCEPTABLE CIRCUMVENTION OF U.S. IMMIGRATION LAW. END  
SUMMARY.

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1. THE EMBASSY HAS RECENTLY BECOME AWARE OF CONTINUING  
LARGE-SCALE ENLISTMENT BY PANAMANIAN INTO U.S. ARMED FORCES.  
EMBASSY EARLIER COGNIZANT OF SITUATIONS AS RESULT OF CONTINU-  
ING NIV REQUESTS BY PANAMANIAN DEPENDENTS OF SERVICEMENT.

2. NAVAL INVESTIGATORS IN CANAL ZONE RECENTLY UNCOVERED  
BREADTH AND SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION. INVESTIGATION

FOCUSED ON PANAMANIAN RECRUITS IN MARINE CORPS, SEVERAL OF WHOM RECENTLY STATIONED IN CANAL ZONE AFTER BASIC TRAINING. IN CONJUNCTION WITH INS INSPECTORS, PROBE REVEALED LARGE-SCALE ENLISTMENT FRAUD IN BROOKLYN, NEW YORK DISTRICT WITH THE USE OF FALSIFIED DOCUMENTS. INS INSPECTORS REPORTED 156 MARINE ENLISTMENT PACKETS FOR PANAMANIAN, DATING FROM OCTOBER 1976, FOUND IN BROOKLYN OFFICE.

3. PRESENT CLASS IN MARINE BOOT CAMP AT PARRIS ISLAND, S.C. MAY NUMBER AS HIGH AS 137 PANAMANIAN NATIONALS. EIGHTEEN PANAMANIAN PRESENTLY SERVING IN COMBINED SERVICES IN THE CANAL ZONE. THREE ARE MARINES SENT TO THE CANAL ZONE IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS. CONSULAR SECTION OF EMBASSY BELIEVES LARGE NUMBERS OF PANAMANIAN IN MARINE CORPS INDICATIVE OF SITUATION IN OTHER BRANCHES, PARTICULARLY NAVY.

4. SITUATION PRESENTS OBVIOUS SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS. ONE PANAMANIAN PRESENTLY WITH NAVY IN CANAL ZONE ENLISTED ILLEGALLY ON 1/20/75. CORRECTIVE ACTION BY NAVY WAS TO PROCESS EXPEDITIOUS NATURALIZATION. TOP SECRET CLEARANCE GRANTED TO HIM 7/8/76 AFTER NATURALIZATION OBTAINED 1/9/76. SERVICEMAN PRESENTLY ASSIGNED NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS. ANOTHER PANAMANIAN, PRESENTLY STATIONED IN CANAL ZONE, WHO ALSO ENLISTED ILLEGALLY, WAS GRANTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SECRET CLEARANCE ON 4/7/77. HIS CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED 4/1/77. IN ADDITION, VICE CONSUL RECENTLY RECEIVED NIV APPLICATION OF PANAMANIAN WISHING TO TRAVEL TO MIAMI TO CONCLUDE INTERVIEW FOR EXPEDITIOUS NATURALIZATION. APPLICANT HAD ENLISTED ILLEGALLY IN MARINES 7/2/75. SERVING 16 MONTHS BEFORE DISCHARGED. ALIEN STATUS DISCOVERED AFTER BACKGROUND CHECK WHEN ASSIGNED TO HIGH SECURITY COMMAND AT GOOSE CREEK, S.C.

5. IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE HERE AMONG YOUNG PANAMANIAN SEEKING TO ENTER ARMED FORCES THAT MILITARY RELUCTANT TO PROSECUTE FRAUDULENT ENLISTMENT. AS RESULT, THE ONLY THREAT IS AN HONORABLE DISCHARGE AND SEPARATION FROM SERVICE UPON DISCOVERY OF ALIEN STATUS. THIS IS MITIGATED BY KNOWLEDGE THAT ALIENS ENTITLED TO EXPEDITIOUS NATURALIZATION UNDER SEC. 329 OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT. IN PARTICULAR, RESPONSE AND APPARENT POLICY OF NAVY IS DISTRESSING. LETTERS FROM CHIEF OF NAVY PERSONNEL, WASHINGTON, CONCERNING SEVERAL PANAMANIAN NOW STATIONED IN THE CANAL ZONE RECOMMENDED ALIENS APPLY FOR NATURALIZATION AS CORRECTIVE ACTION TO SITUATION.

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ACTION VO-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 SY-05 SAB-02 L-03  
PPT-01 PM-04 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 NSAE-00 INR-07 SS-15  
NSC-05 H-01 /058 W  
-----126163 091614Z /40

R 082245Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2722  
INFO INS, CO WASHDC  
PANCANAL  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USCINCSO  
INS NEW YORK

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6. FRAUDULENT ENLISTMENT AND RESULTING EXPEDITIOUS  
NATURALIZATION PRESENT EMBASSY WITH UNACCEPTABLE SITUATION.  
EASE OF ENLISTMENT INTO ARMED FORCES HAS RESULTED  
IN MANY YOUNG PANAMANIAN EQUATING TOURIST VISA WITH  
NATURALIZATION. PROLIFERATION OF FRAUD IN TOURIST VISA  
APPLICATIONS HAS INCREASED MARKEDLY IN PANAMA. AN  
ADDED DIFFICULTY IS THAT EXPEDITIOUS NATURALIZATION OF  
PANAMANIAN SERVICEMEN IS ROUTINELY GRANTED WITHOUT  
EMBASSY CLEARANCE OR NOTIFICATION. INS MAY THUS BE  
COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF POSSIBLE CRIMINAL RECORD  
OR DEROGATORY INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT OTHERWISE CLASSIFY  
INDIVIDUAL INELIGIBLE FOR AN IMMIGRANT VISA. THIS  
PRESENTS A COMPLETE CIRCUMVENTION OF IMMIGRATION AND  
CITIZENSHIP SCREENING PROCESS AT THE EMBASSY LEVEL.

7. INS MIAMI INFORMS EMBASSY THAT THEY CANNOT GO  
BEHIND HONORABLE DISCHARGE FOR PANAMANIAN WHO ENTERED  
SERVICE ILLEGALLY AND NOW SEEKING NATURALIZATION.  
HANDS OF EMBASSY AND INS ARE TIED IN PRESENT SITUATION  
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UNLESS MILITARY PROSECUTES AND DISMISSES FRAUDULENT  
ENLISTEES WITH DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE.

8. IN VIEW OF SITUATION, EMBASSY URGES DEPARTMENT TO  
PURSUE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS:

A. REQUEST IMMEDIATE REVIEW OF ARMED FORCES ENLIST-  
MENT PROCEDURES, PARTICULARLY FOR INDIVIDUALS USING CANAL  
ZONE BIRTH CERTIFICATES, WHICH ARE NOT, REPEAT NOT  
PROOF OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR NATIONALITY.

B. SEEK POLICY DECISION FROM ARMED SERVICES ON  
PROSECUTION OF ALIENS FRAUDULENTLY ENTERING SERVICE.  
EMBASSY OBSERVES THAT MANY COMMANDING OFFICERS APPARENTLY  
RELUCTANT TO PURSUE PROBLEM, APART FROM URGING  
EXPEDITIOUS NATURALIZATION.

C. IN CONJUNCTION WITH INS, DEPARTMENT SHOULD  
SEEK FORMAL TERMINATION OF VIET NAM HOSTILITIES CLAUSE  
OF SEC. 329 OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.  
TERMINATION AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, MUST BE BY EXECUTIVE  
ORDER.

9. UNDER A COVERING AIRGRAM, EMBASSY POUCHING ALL  
INFORMATION DEVELOPED ON FRAUDULENT ENLISTEES.

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ILLEGAL ENLISTMENT OF PANAMANIAN INTO U.S. ARMED FORCES  
**TAGS:** CVIS, MPOL, ASEC, MILI, SPOP, PN, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009